THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) At present no specific scheme/project is being implemented/sponsored by the Government in the North Eastern Region for use of Israel like Scientific methods for enhancement of agriculture production.

However, a Technology Mission on Intergrated Development of Horiticulture in the North Eastern Region including Assam has been proposed to be implemented during the 9th Five Year Plan. The Technology Mission envisages an integration of the activities of research, development, marketing and post harvest management of horticulture of the North East Region.

CROP Insurance Scheme for Himachal Pradesh

967. SHRIMATI CHANDRESH KUMARI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Comprehensive Crop Insurance Scheme covers all farmers of country at present;

(b) whether the loanee farmers in Himachal Pradesh are being covered under Crop Insurance Scheme at Present;

(c) whether Government have been requested by State Government of Himachal Pradesh to cover non-loanee farmers under the scheme as in (a);

(d) whether Government have also been requested to provide insurance coverage to high value crops like Vegetables, Potatoes, fruit crops besides foodgrain crops; and

(e) if so, details thereof with action taken on (c) and (d)?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) The Comprehensive Crop Insurance Scheme (CCIS) which is presently being implemented by 15 States and 2 Union Territories (including Himachal Pradesh) Covers those farmers who avail crop loans from the rural financial institutions viz. cooperatives, commercial banks and regional rural banks for raising wheat, paddy, millets (including maize), pulses and oilseeds.

(c) to (e) Yes, Sir, suggestions for coverage of non-loanee farmers, fruits, vegetable crops etc. under crop Insurance have been received from the Government of Himachal Pradesh.

To enlarge the coverage in terms of farmers, crops and risks under CCIS, the Government have decided to introduce a Modified Comprehensive Crop Insurance Scheme (MCCIS) from Kharif 1999 season. Under the new scheme, it is proposed to cover all farmers (both loanee and non-loanee) and commercial/ horticultural crops in respect of which requisite yield data are available. Details of the new scheme are being finalised in consultation with Ministeries/ Departments and other agencies concerned.

Insurance coverage to plantation and fruits crops is already available under separate schemes implemented by the subsidiary companies of the General Insurance Corporation of India.

Trend of Agricultural Producation

968. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the growth rate in agricultural production during 1997-98 and 1998-99;

(b) how these trends compare with those of 1995-96 and 1996-97;

(c) what are the reasons for low growth in agriculture in recent years; and

(d) what are the projection for 1999-2000?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) The annual growth rates in gross domestic